



Trip Leader Guidelines

Introduction

1. These guidelines have been written to help Trip Leaders prepare and run Club trips on behalf of the Four Wheel Drive Club of WA (Inc.) (the Club).
2. The aim is to provide a simple set of guidelines that Club members of all skill levels can plan and run a trip safely.
3. The guidelines can be used for all types of trips run on behalf of the Club including 4WD day trips, overnight trips, extended trips and social trips.
4. A successful trip comes down to good planning, preparation, communication and a good sense of humour.
5. It is acknowledged that running a trip can be extremely stressful, in particular for those less experienced in doing so; however, the better prepared you are for it the less stressful it will be.

General

6. Trip Leaders have the overall responsibility for the safe running of a trip. Clauses 7.3 – 7.5 of the Club's By-laws outlines the trip leaders authority and responsibilities when leading a Club trip.
7. Clause 8.8 of the Club's By-laws require that prior to the running of a trip, potential Trip Leaders are to liaise with the Trips Committee to request approval to run a trip. In the first instance Trip Leaders are to liaise with the Trips Co-ordinator or in their absence the Chairman of the Trips Committee or a member of the Trips Committee.
8. When advising the Trips Co-ordinator / Trips Committee, Trip Leaders are to advise them of the basic outline for the trip and to seek any guidance from the Trips Co-ordinator. The Trips Co-ordinator will then advise the Trips Committee and the Magazine Editor.
9. Mentorship. Should a Trip Leader require it, they can ask for assistance of a mentor who will assist them in the planning of a trip. Mentors are Club Members who have experience in the planning and running of Club trips. The Trips Co-ordinator will advise which members are happy to be mentors.
10. Trip Leaders have at all times the absolute discretion to make the final judgement to determine the suitability and numbers of vehicles on their trip.
11. Trip Leaders also have the discretion to accept or reject any person's participation on a trip.
12. Trip Participants. All trip participants are responsible for their own vehicles and their actions on a trip and as a minimum, trip participants must:
 - a. Register to attend a trip by signing up for it or contacting the Trip Leader directly;

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- b. Ensure that their vehicles are in a roadworthy condition and all recovery equipment is in working condition and maintained to a high standard;
- c. Ensure that their vehicle has front and rear recovery points correctly fitted. For the newer vehicles on the market that do not have front recovery points available, they are to ensure that once those recovery points become available to have them fitted ASAP;
- d. Unless otherwise advised, all participants are responsible for providing their own food and water etc;
- e. Follow all directions of the Trip Leader; and
- f. Not leave the convoy without notifying the Trip Leader.

Trip Planning

13. Prior to the running of a trip, it is very important that some level of planning be conducted, so that the trip is enjoyable and safe for all participants.
14. The selection of the route is of paramount importance and Trip Leaders are to ensure that they are fully aware of any hazards, points of interest, campsites, weather conditions (including fire bans) that will be encountered during the trip.
15. Consideration should be given to:
 - a. Type of Trip – i.e. a day trip, overnight trip, extended trip, social trip etc;
 - b. Destination – this includes the start point, the route to be travelled and the end point;
 - c. The route – plan the route and include alternative routes if required;
 - d. Trip Rating – it should be rated to the highest possible expected conditions taking in all possible weather conditions and other factors;
 - e. The following ratings should be used:
 - i. Scenic / Social – sealed roads, no 4WDing mostly bitumen roads;
 - ii. Easy – little or no 4WDing experience required, basic recovery equipment required;
 - iii. Moderate – more complex track with 4WD engaged and may require 'low range' to be engaged, all mandatory and essential equipment must be carried;
 - iv. Hard – complex terrain including steep and rutted tracks, mud or soft sand, all mandatory and essential equipment must be carried; and
 - v. Extreme – very complex track or terrain, including very steep and deeply rutted tracks, extremely soft sand or very muddy conditions

and the likelihood of winching, all mandatory and essential equipment must be carried.

- f. Participants – decide on the number of vehicles / people appropriate for the trip and skill levels. It is recommended that 15 vehicles be the maximum number; however, in instances where more vehicles are allowed, breaking the numbers into convoys is recommended. This is for ease of control and safety.
- g. Equipment – assess the type of equipment required for each trip and ensure that everyone has the appropriate equipment and that the equipment is rated for the types of recovery expected. Be aware of cheap equipment that isn't rated.
- h. Vehicles – all vehicles must be registered and insured and set up for the type of trip;
- i. Permits – obtain any permits or permissions required before the day of the trip;
- j. Maps – ensure that you have maps of the area to be travelled and if using electronic maps ensure that you have back up paper maps;
- k. Season – decide on when to run the trip. Be aware of fire season (summer) and any total fire bans or other restrictions (road closure due to flooding) that may be in force;
- l. Research – gather information about the area to be visited. Resources such as maps, articles, YouTube videos, books, other club members or clubs etc are great sources of information;
- m. Supplies – consider what food, fuel and accommodation requirements will be need for the trip. Ensure that you inform all participants of those requirements and that they are required to supply their own unless otherwise informed;
- n. Communications – ensure everyone has access / use of an 80 channel UHF CB radio, either hand held or vehicle mounted. Where possible have a Satellite phone available or some other means of satellite communication (i.e. Spot GPS or similar) if heading into remote country;
- o. Emergency plan – develop an emergency plan in case something happens and advise all participants prior to the trip; and
- p. Back-up Plan – in some cases having a back-up plan is essential in case the trip needs to be cancelled or altered.

16. Advertising the trip. The more time you can advertise a trip for, the greater the numbers will attend. The minimum amount of time should be 4 weeks as this will allow for

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it to be advertised at two meetings and to appear in the Club's magazine. When advertising the trip the following should be advised:

- a. Date / Time / Duration of the trip;
- b. Destination/s – state the meeting point, destination/s, the expected finish point and the total distance expected to be covered;
- c. Trip rating;
- d. Equipment – advise the minimum equipment to be carried;
- e. Vehicle numbers;
- g. Vehicle requirements – state the minimum vehicle requirements and advise if any speciality accessories are required;
- h. Recovery gear; and
- i. Food & water.

17. Trip kits / documents. The Club is in the process of developing new trip kits, but as a minimum the following should be carried by a Trip Leader:

- a. Trip Participant List;
- b. Visitor list; and
- c. Personal details form (should be carried by all members in their glove box).

Trip Survey

18. If possible it is a good idea to conduct a trip survey with a couple of other vehicles as this will give you an excellent understanding of the track conditions and what obstacles you may encounter on the day of the trip.

19. The survey should, where possible, be conducted at least a fortnight from the date of the actual trip so that the conditions will be very similar (weather permitting) to those expected to be encountered on the day.

20. When conducting the survey, one of the participants on the survey should also be attending the main trip and they would well suited to be Tail-end Charlie as they will have full knowledge of the trip and will be in a better position to assist the Trip Leader if needed.

21. In those situations where a survey was not conducted, it is advised that you let all participants know as this will lessen any concerns they may have should you have to make alterations etc as the trips proceeds.

The Trip

22. On the day of the trip the following must be considered / done:

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- a. Meeting point. Ensure that everyone knows where the meeting point is, what time they are required to be there and what time the trip will commence. As Trip Leader you should aim to be there before any other members arrive so that you are there to greet them;
- b. Introductions and Head count. Ensure that you greet everyone, in particular new members and introduce them to everyone and ensure that everyone has arrived;
- c. Brief. Ensure that you brief everyone on the day's (or trip) activity and nominate a Tail-end Charlie. If required, place everyone into convoys and appoint convoy leaders;
- d. Tail-end Charlie. They should be an experienced members and have some knowledge of the trip. It is their role to keep the convoy together and advise the Trip Leader when they pass points of interest;
- e. Trip Report. Nominate someone to write the trip report for the Club's magazine and someone to give a quick talk at the Club meeting;
- f. Weather. Check weather reports and advise all participants if there is any changes as a result of the weather;
- g. Convoy Order. Ensure everyone is placed in a convoy order and they know who is in front of them and who is behind them especially important if they are new members or inexperienced. Try and mix experienced and inexperienced members throughout the convoy;
- h. Convoy Procedures. Ensure that everyone is aware of the convoy procedures for that particular trip as they may change from trip to trip;
- i. Communications. Ensure that all participants have an 80 channel UHF CB radio and it works. Ensure that they are on the right channel – the Club's default channel is 13. Ensure that you conduct a radio check before departing;
- j. Breaks. Ensure that you have regular breaks and give people time to have toilet breaks etc. If camping overnight, ensure that you arrive at your designated campsite well before dark and give plenty of notice for the departure time in the morning;
- k. Early Departures. If any member needs to leave a trip early they are to notify the Trip leader before setting off at the start of the trip so that an agreed time can be arranged and everyone who is required to be notified is made aware;

Recovery Situations

23. Unfortunately, due to the nature of 4WDing a vehicle or vehicles may need to be recovered and this could be a simple bogging to an extreme situation where a vehicle is in peril of slipping off the edge of a cliff.
24. Recovery situations are also the most dangerous situations that we may find ourselves in as anything can go wrong and if it does, it happens quickly.
25. In a recovery situation, a Trip Leader should either appoint someone to lead the recovery or lead it himself. Often it is better to allow someone more experienced to lead a recovery situation, allowing the Trip Leader to concentrate on the rest of the participants.
26. Once a recovery starts, only those immediately involved in the recovery should be in the area and everyone else should be a safe distance away.
27. In a recovery situation where a winch is being used, all non-essential members should be a minimum of two winch rope lengths radius away from the recovery point, this even includes if dynema rope is being used.
28. In a situation where a vehicle is to be snatched, then no person should be between the vehicle being recovered and the vehicle doing the snatching. Everyone else should be twice the distance of the snatch strap away from the vehicles.
29. At no time during a recovery – i.e. winching or snatching – should the tow ball be used and all recovery points, shackles, ropes, straps etc must be correctly rated for the type of recovery being conducted.
30. Any snatch strap or winch rope that is being used in a recovery situation that shows signs of wear and tear must not be used as this could become a weak point and lead to the rope or strap potentially breaking.
31. A minimum of one – but two is better – dampeners should be used when conducting winching or a snatch recovery as this will reduce the likelihood of the rope or strap from recoiling. Ideally, if one dampener is being used it should be placed as close as possible to any shackles or at least one third of the way down the rope towards the vehicle doing the winching or snatching.

The End of the Trip

32. Every trip must have an end point, whether it is at the end of the track or another point and all participants need to know where and when the trip will end. The end point can be somewhere like a café or pub should anyone like to socialise afterwards.
33. It is important that Trip Leaders announce that it is the end of the trip. Trip Leaders should also provide directions back to major routes so that participants are aware of which way to head to go home.

After the Trip

34. Return any Club equipment and report any damaged equipment to the Property officer.

35. Ensure that the member designated to write the report is aware of the date that it is due to the Editor and the member giving the talk advises which meeting they will give it at.

Criticism / Complaints

36. Unfortunately not everyone will enjoy a trip and this could be for a number of reasons and the first thing to do is not to take it to heart as you cannot (and will not) always please everyone.

37. Secondly, you should not get angry with the person who didn't like the trip or made the complaint. Instead the best thing to do is to talk to them to find out why they didn't enjoy the trip and if the points are valid then take them on board but if they aren't just ignore them.

38. If you feel the complaint isn't justified or malicious (which happens sometimes) do not get into an argument with the member but acknowledge their complaint and then advise the Trips Co-ordinator.

39. Difficult trip participants. Unfortunately at times there will be someone on a trip who becomes difficult to handle for whatever reason, i.e. they don't wish to follow instructions, they try and over-rule your decision making, they complain a lot etc. In these instances undertake the following:

- a. Do not lose your temper or get into argument with them;
- b. Approach them and try and discuss with them why they are behaving in that manner;
- c. If they refuse to change their behaviour then you are within your rights to ask them to leave the trip; however, do not abandon them out bush (as much as you may wish to do so);
- d. Instead, escort them to the nearest main road and ask them to leave the trip;
- e. Should they refuse to do so, then continue on with the trip but ignore their behaviour;
- f. Make a written record of their behaviour and any actions that took place; and
- g. Advise the Trips Co-ordinator immediately you get the opportunity and advise them of what had occurred.

Conclusion

40. The ultimate success of a trip comes down to good preparation and planning. The more you plan and research the more knowledge you will have which will assist you when

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you are out on the tracks. It will also give lots of confidence to the trip participants in regards to your skills as a trip leader.

41. Ultimately, at the end of the day the main thing is to enjoy yourself and you should plan trips on what you want to do or where you like to go. By running the trip, you are simply inviting others to come along and enjoy the time with you.

42. As you become more experienced at leading trips, the easier it is to plan and organise and the thrill of it can be very addictive and you will find yourself planning more complex trips.

43. Enjoy your trip planning experiences.

Annexes:

- A. Convoy Procedures
- B. Code of Ethics

Annex A – Convoy Procedures

Introduction

1. To ensure that each trip is run smoothly and without disruption it is important that all members follow the current convoy procedures, failure to do so may result in the convoy becoming separated and members becoming lost, thereby requiring the Trip Leader and other senior members wasting valuable time searching for the lost members.
2. There is also the possibility that on becoming separated that those members may accidentally enter areas that are restricted or becoming involved in serious accidents; therefore, it is important that these guidelines are followed and that all members are aware of them.
3. Prior to the commencement of the trip, it is advisable that the Trip Leader Prepare a convoy order and advise or provide a copy to all trip participants.
4. It is recommended that the Trip Leader when planning the convoy order ensures that he puts new members in amongst the old members so that there is a good mix of experience for the new members to learn from.
5. The Trip Leader is the sole person in charge at all times unless something has happened to them in which case the 2IC will then be in charge.
6. The 2IC is normally Tail-end Charlie, unless otherwise advised by the Trip Leader.

Communications

7. All trip participants are to ensure that they have a fully working / operational 80 channel UHF radio. In situations where a trip participant does not have a UHF radio, they are to advise the Trip Leader before attending the trip so that a handheld UHF radio can be organised. Note – the Club has a couple of handheld radios for members to use.
8. The nationally recognised 4WD Convoy channel is Channel 10.
9. The Club's default UHF channel is Channel 13 unless another channel is stipulated by the Trip Leader.
10. Prior to commencement of a trip, the Trip Leader is to conduct a 'Radio Check' to ensure that:
 - a. Trip participants have their radios turned on;
 - b. That the radio is working; and
 - c. That it is on the correct channel.
11. During a trip, trip participants should acknowledge all radio instructions given to them.
12. In situations where the convoy is spread out over along distances, participants in the centre of the convoy are to relay all instructions from the trip leader to Tail-end Charlie and vice versa.
13. During recovery or hazardous situations, all participants are to keep their radio chatter to a minimum to allow for those in charge of the recovery or guiding can clearly pass on any instructions.

In Convoy

14. It is advisable and best practice to have all headlights turned on whilst in convoy.

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The Four Wheel Drive Club of WA (Inc) – www.4wdclubwa.com

15. Always keep the vehicle behind you in view.
16. On approach to a decision point / obstacle (i.e. intersections / crossroads, washouts etc):
 - a. The Trip Leader will advise on the course of action to be taken at that point;
 - b. On reaching the decision point / obstacle, you are to acknowledge the vehicle in front that you can see them;
 - c. That vehicle will then move off;
 - d. You are to wait until the vehicle following you sees you and acknowledges you;
 - e. Once they have acknowledged you, move off slowly;
 - f. On steep inclines / descents or hazardous obstacles, proceed one vehicle at a time; and
 - g. Once through the obstacle, call the next vehicle through once you are clear.
17. All gates are to be left as found – the Trip Leader will advise Tail-end Charlie if the gate is to be opened or closed.
18. On open roads (i.e. Highways etc) maintain the legal speed limit (Note – for vehicles towing in WA the max speed limit is 100 kph).
19. Do not sit too close to the vehicle in front of you – maintain enough distance in case other traffic are overtaking the convoy and can move in between your vehicle and the one in front safely.
20. Advise the convoy and Trip Leader if vehicles are overtaking the convoy.
21. The Trip Leader is to advise of any oncoming traffic such as wide loads, dangerous situations etc.
22. On dirt roads, leave enough space so that you are not sitting in the thick of the dust.
23. Due to dusty conditions the convoy will be further spread out than normal – ensure that all radio communication is passed through the convoy.
24. During any recovery situation, the Trip Leader is the only one in charge of the situation unless he delegates that responsibility to someone else.
25. When stopping, ensure that all vehicles move as far to the left as possible and do not block the road or track.
26. Vehicles should not leave the convoy unless prior arrangement is made and the Trip Leader is informed.
27. Bad or dangerous behaviour will not be tolerated and anyone doing so will be asked to leave the convoy.
28. Should you need to pullover for any reason, immediately advise the Trip Leader so that he can advise you of what to do.
29. Remember, you are responsible for the vehicle behind you!

Code of Ethics

30. All road rules and regulations must be abided by at all time.
31. WA State Road Law applies to all land not considered private property.
32. Drive In a manner consistent with our Code of Ethics.

Annex B – Code of Ethics

Introduction

1. This document has been produced in the interest of promoting safe and responsible driving both on and off road.
2. All members are to abide by this Code of Ethics, failure to do so may result in you from being removed from the Club or a trip.

General

3. Obey all the Laws and Regulations for Recreational Vehicles that apply to Public Lands / Places.
4. Respect the cultural, heritage and environmental places of interest both on public and private lands.
5. Respect all native flora and fauna.
6. Keep to formed vehicle tracks.
7. Obtain all permits and permissions before entering into restricted areas / roads / tracks etc.
8. Do not disturb livestock or watering points and leave all gates as found.
9. Keep the environment clean – take out all rubbish.
10. Keep your vehicle in sound mechanical condition.
11. Keep all impact – camping and driving – to a minimum.
12. Take enough food and water to last longer than the planned trip.
13. Take enough spares to get you out of trouble.
14. Always carry a first aid kit.
15. Enjoy your trip and respect others enjoying theirs.
16. Plan ahead and advise someone of your plans including departure and return times, places visiting etc.
17. Carry proper communications for all remote travel – at a minimum carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) and preferably a Satellite Phone or HF Radio as well and know how to use them.
18. Report any suspicious behaviour to the relevant authorities.